

## Sesame Street *Healthy Habits for Life* Kits

### Staff Guidance



The Montana WIC Program has partnered with Sesame Workshop to encourage Montana families to develop healthy habits. The *Healthy Habits for Life: Get Healthy Now Show* kit is a wonderful way to frame some of the messages for the new food packages coming later this year. The new food packages are based on the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, which encourage more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk, physical activity, and variety, balance, and moderation when choosing foods. This year, families with children will be offered a kit that uses Sesame Street characters to promote nutrition and physical activity in fun, creative ways. The kit is in English and Spanish, and contains an interactive DVD, storybook, and guide for parents.

Key messages included in the *Healthy Habits for Life* kit:

1. Eat 5 fruits and vegetables every day!
2. *Anytime foods* are so good for you, they may be eaten anytime.
  - ▶ *Anytime* foods include fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains, and low-fat milk. These are all foods in the new WIC food packages!
  - ▶ Eat a vegetable at every meal!
3. *Sometime foods* are usually high in sugar, fat or salt, so enjoy them sometimes.
4. Eat together as a family. Converse and share the good parts of your day.
5. The more you move, the healthier your body is, so be active every day!

For practice, try saying this script out loud to help families get excited about the kit:



“WIC is giving out new food packages later this year and we want to give your family this gift to help you get ready [show kit]. WIC has teamed with Sesame Street to highlight some of the new foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables, and whole grains. The Muppet characters will get your kids excited to try these foods! There is a DVD featuring Elmo and his new fruit and vegetable friends, a storybook for your child to follow, and a magazine for you with shopping tips and recipe ideas for the new foods [show and point out the pieces as you talk about them]. May I share with you some ways you and your family can use this kit in your home?”

How can you help WIC families use these kits?

- ◆ Discuss 1 – 2 of the key messages from above with parents.
- ◆ Encourage families to watch the video, read the storybook, and to try some of the activities.
- ◆ Point out the magazine for shopping tips, recipes, and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity.
- ◆ Try some of the activities yourself and encourage parents to do the same!
- ◆ Suggest families try some of the shopping and eating tips offered in the video and magazine.
- ◆ Encourage parents to make healthy choices too, since they are role models for their children.
- ◆ Suggest families try some of the *easy* recipes for the new foods.
- ◆ Recommend families try some of the different fruits and vegetables shown in the kit.
- ◆ If your clinic has a DVD player in the lobby or waiting area, show this video during clinic hours.
- ◆ Familiarize yourself with the website for more activity ideas to share with families:

<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/initiatives/health/healthyhabits>

## Details, Details, Details



Your program will receive a number of kits based on your participation and the total we ordered. They are being delivered free of charge to your local food bank or another site where commodity foods are delivered by the Commodity Warehouse personnel.

*Who:* Families with low-risk children between the ages of 2 and 5 years of age.

*When:* After about mid-year (June and later).

*How:* Although this does not meet the participant-centered aspect of VENA, all participants will need education on the new foods and food packages. An explanation of the kits and their purpose can be used as appropriate *nutrition education* for targeted participants (who) in lieu of a scheduled nutrition education contact. Conversations with the participant about the kit should still utilize the other aspects of VENA.

*Documentation:* The information about providing the kit, the discussion points, and goal of how the participant will use the video with their family should be documented in the same place all nutrition education is documented in your clinic.

*What else:*

*Can the kit be given to families with high-risk children?* Yes, but other nutrition education appropriate to the child's high-risk status must be provided.

*What if the participant refuses the kit?* You will need to provide other planned nutrition education, just as you will for participants who do not meet the "who" above.

*Could this be delivered in a class setting?* Yes, a class setting is an acceptable delivery method.

*What if my local program does not use all of the kits before the new food packages roll out?* They may still be used for nutrition education with the above "who" population if that fits the participants stated needs. There are a multitude of ways the kit can be worked into the stated participant goal(s).

*What if my local program runs out of kits before every family eligible receives one?* You can check with other local programs to find out if they have a surplus they can share with you.

